



The Compassionate Friends

Santa Clarita Valley Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

September-October 2019

Volume 20, No. 5



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS is a self-help, nonprofit organization offering friendship, understanding and hope to families grieving the death of a child of any age, from any cause. When a child dies, at age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides personal comfort, hope, support to every family experiencing the death of a son or daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family. The butterfly signifies a new life for our lost children and a different life for ourselves. It is a symbol of hope, rebirth, and reiteration and beauty.

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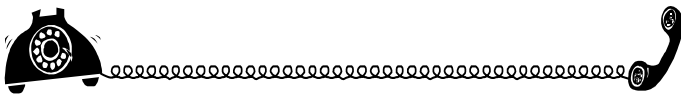
MEETINGS

We have one meeting a month. They are usually held on the 1st Thursday of each month.
Our next 2 meetings will be on **September 5 & October 3.**

TIME: **7:00 PM**

MEETING PLACE: **Fellowship Christian Church
26889 Bouquet Canyon Rd., Ste. C.
Saugus, Ca 91350**

(Take the side street next to the Goodwill store and make a left behind the store, the church is located in that building. Entry to the church is the double glass doors.)



FOR INFORMATION OR FOR A LOVING LISTERNER, PLEASE CALL:

Diane Briones (Leader) 661-252-4654
Alice Renolds (Co-Leader) 661-252-4374
Kathy Kelly (Treasurer) 661-724-1450
Linda Stout (Remembrance Secretary) 661-202-8638

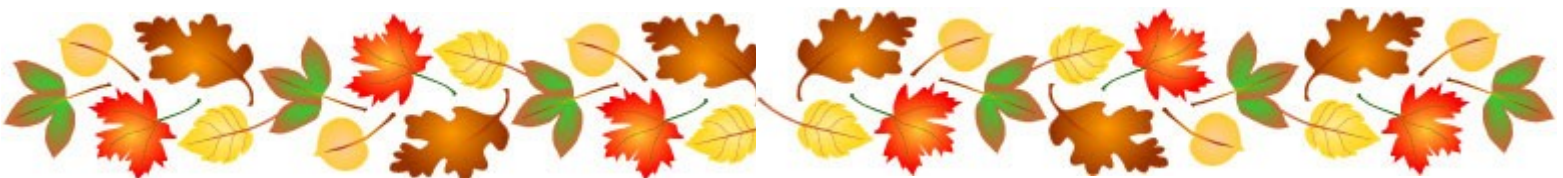
I Wonder

When did sadness stop covering everything?
I don't know.
It must have first been for moments, then maybe hours, days eventually.
Then for a long time no longer ever-present, but just below the surface waiting for a thought to trigger it.
Now I live with more joy than sadness but even now sadness surfaces unexpectedly as the dark shape of loss stirs the cauldron and tears are added to the soup of life, salty still, but not as bitter or overpowering, adding an important flavor to the whole of me.

~Genesse Bourdeau Gentry
From: *Catching the Light—Coming Back to Life After the Death of a Child*

Grief isn't a seasonal song it's a lifetime song, but it doesn't have to be a sad song forever. Live through the hurt so that joy can return to warm your heart and light your life.

~ Darcie Sims





Late September

This may well be
the softest time of all.
Does mild September
still surprise your mind
with memories you thought
you would not have?
Believe me, friend, that
(after many tears)
This may well be the softest time of all.

~By Sascha Wagner



CHANGING OF THE SEASONS

The summer heat is fading and the evenings begin to cool; autumn whispers in the wind. Labor Day often signals the last 'hurrah' for days-off as school buses resume their familiar routes and leaf gathering chores are added to our days.

In our journey towards recovery, there are also seasons. For many, autumn is a reflective time, when nature begins its own cycle of shutting down and dying. A time of quiet melancholy may fill your heart. Distant shadows of the approaching holidays begin to creep into your mind.

But if you look closely, you will notice autumn sings loudly her song of beauty and rebirth. She puts on her finest wardrobe, filled with colors of warmth and comfort. Different are these colors than bright spring and summer florals, but how beautiful and peaceful. I see autumn as a season of inner strength, with roots reaching deep into the heart of the earth for nurturing.

So as we gather leaves and find long forgotten jackets, my wish is that the harsh edges of pain will begin to recede and your memories bring you warmth and comfort.

~D. Barta
TCF Portland, OR



School Days . . .

Some of you will have read or heard this before but one of the most stressful times for some bereaved parents is the opening of school. All the ads on TV and in the newspaper are of kids—with new clothes, lunch boxes, and school supplies—all reminding us that someone from our life will be missing this year. Whether your child died as an infant, during school age, or after they graduated will determine whether your pain will come from memories or unfulfilled longings, or, perhaps both. Maybe you wish you could go back to the days where everything seemed simple and you sent your child off to school in new clothes and everything was okay. Maybe your school-aged child died recently and with children on the streets again headed for school, you see one who, from the back, looks just like yours. I used to hold my breath until I could see their face. Or perhaps you are the only one who remembers that there should be one more child turning five and starting kindergarten, knowing that it should be your year to outfit your "baby," meet their first "real" teacher, and watch them start turning into a "big kid." Undoubtedly, you will have friends talking about "losing their baby" and will wish that you had this opportunity and that they will never know what it is like to truly lose theirs.

Whichever your pain, it's real and may be easier to deal with if you think about it and talk about it with someone who understands. The day I am writing this newsletter would have been my son's 25th birthday. I wonder if he would have a child getting ready to start school this year.

For some, the pain is knowing that because of your child's death, they are more distant from his or her children, and they think about those grandchildren at this time of year.

For all of us, we remember our children, we cherish their memory, and we somehow, live on.

TCF Newsletter,
Central Arkansas Chapter

*"A mother holds her children's hands for
just a little while,
But she holds their hearts forever."*

~Betty Stenlake

Chapter News

Meeting Topics & Info

September 5 - "Tangible & Intangible Gifts From Our Loved Ones"-focusing on the many gifts that our loved ones have left behind for us.

October 3 - "Circles of Love" - Getting to know each other's children & grandchildren.



World Suicide Prevention Day
Working Together to Prevent Suicide
September 10, 2019



Please light a candle near a window at 8 PM on Monday, September 10, 2019. To show your support for suicide prevention, to remember a lost loved one, and for the

The loss of a loved one who has completed suicide....

There are no perfect formulas for living through the loss of a loved one who has completed suicide. There are no absolutes, no real guidelines, only the sharing of common experiences and reactions that occur.

No words can explain adequately the phenomenon of self-destruction. Nor can spoken language instruct a family in how to survive. As yet, we know no final answers. Hence, we must be satisfied with partial explanations, with guesses, and with the knowledge that each incident is different. True, there are common denominators but ultimately we must search for our own piece of the truth by living through the questions.

When you are searching for truth, Richard Felder, M.D. of Atlanta, recommends that: "Whatever you can find out about your feelings, or find inside yourself about the suicide, is the only way you can ever be real about it, Face it, what ever it is."

From the book My Son...My Son...A Guide to Healing After Death, Loss of Suicide. By Iris Bolton

Dear Compassionate Friends:

We are always looking for extra help and would welcome fresh and new ideas. Please consider joining our steering committee! We meet approximately every 3 months to plan our chapter's activities and manage our business matters.

*"An opportunity to **HELP**
is an opportunity to **HEAL**"*

Welcome New Members



Attending your first meeting takes courage and it is always hard to say "welcome" because we are so very sorry for the reason which made you eligible for our membership in TCF. However, we are glad you found us! We cannot take away your pain but we can offer our friendship and support, Do try and to attend at least 3 meetings so you have a chance to meet others who are bereaved and discover that special acceptance that occurs with new friends who truly understand.

New to our chapter is:

Matthew Thole, Brother of Brent

Azita Azarpira, Mother of Amin

Keith & Lise Parcells, Parents of Tommy

Rose Mary Dubbins, Mother of Dallin

*Mark
Your
Calendar*

*23rd Annual Worldwide
Candle Lighting
December 8 @ 6:30*

Our 19th Annual Candle Lighting Remembrance program will take place on Sunday, December 8th. This program is held in conjunction with the National's 23rd Worldwide event.

We are happy to announce that almost all slots were filled for volunteers to help us put on this amazing event. If you still wish to lend a hand, we would still welcome your help!!

Again this year, the candle lighting will be held indoors at La Mesa Jr. High School located at 26623 May Way, Santa Clarita 91351. Our program begins at **6:30pm**.

In memory of our children, siblings, and grandchildren we will be selling luminaries as a small fundraiser for our chapter for \$10.00 each. These will line the walkway of our ceremony and are yours to take home afterwards. Please join us at the November meeting to decorate your very own personal luminary. If you can't make the meeting, you can simply order one. As this is a fundraiser, we would appreciate that you not bring luminaries from home or from past years.

As in the past, we will have a photo/video presentation during our program. If you want to add your child, sibling, or grandchild's photo to our presentation, we must receive it by November 24. A digital photo is preferred and should be emailed to Alice at TCF.SCV@gmail.com If you only have a hard copy, this can be mailed to Alice Renolds at 27949 Park Meadow Dr., Canyon Country, CA 91387. Please include your name, loved one's name, address and phone number so the photo can be returned. Please only one (1) photo per child.



Wearing A Mask

Halloween is a great time to pretend to be someone else. You can be mean and nasty even though you're usually a pretty nice person, or you can be scary when you usually are the one that gets scared. You can pretend to be strong and powerful or beautiful or mysterious or famous. You can pretend to be anything on Halloween.

It isn't fun, though to try to always wear a mask. Sometimes for a person who is grieving, it seems like you need to always pretend to be your old happy self. Your friends and others may want you to forget about your loss and go on as if nothing much has changed. But it is really hard to mask your true feelings all the time. It is much better for you if you can "take off your mask" and just be yourself sometimes. If you let your feelings out, then you are being honest with yourself and others. By taking off your mask and revealing your true self, you will be a much more real PERSON. It's better to save masks for Halloween.

*~From the Inside Fernside Newsletter
A Center for Grieving Children
<http://www.tcfatlanta.org/>*

One Word ... **COURAGE**

By Rob Anderson, Sugar Grove, IL

I will not tell you that you are strong. I know you do not feel strong. A single word could bring you to your knees. I will not tell you that I admire you. I know you do not feel admirable. More like confused and hurting; falling down a deep, dark hole. What I will tell you though, is that you have courage. Courage you may not have recognized in yourself. Whenever you open a book on grief, read a magazine article on grief, attend a support group, or talk about your grief, you have courage. Whenever you positively express your suffering, you have courage. When you got out of bed but did want to, got dressed, went to work or took care of children and then made it to the end of your day, you found courage. Courage that you never wanted to know you had, but courage that you now have. Courage is not easy to find, let alone keep. However, it can be found; it can be kept. During those horrible days when you may think you are going to die, keep courage firmly in front of you. When your pain is overwhelming, keep courage firmly in your heart. Courage is where your healing lives.

The opportunities to find courage are many, if we pay attention. When you went to the grocery store, even if you collapsed on the floor at the sight of your child's favorite food, but made it back home, you found courage. When you looked through photo albums of your child and cried and cried, you found courage. When you spoke their name, told their story and allowed yourself to grieve, you found courage.

Courage born can never die. Courage found can never be lost. It can be difficult to wake up every day and find courage. The devastation from our child's death is like nothing we have ever experienced. Words like happy, smiles, laughter, meaning, and joy are concepts in a distant reality we think we will never know again. So when you hear the bereaved parents talk about the return of their smile or how they have found meaning again, let that give rise to your courage. Try to have an attitude that says, "If it can happen for them, maybe, just maybe, it can happen for me. It is true, it can happen for you, it has happened for thousands of parents who did their work and did not let death win. Bring courage into your life and it will bring along its partners of hope, a positive attitude, and the desire for a better day.

*<http://www.ameliacenter.org>
Lovingly Lifted from: TCF South Suburban Chapter
Newsletter, Evergreen, IL*

Halloween #8



What would you be this year my dear,
On this your 8th Halloween?
Would you share your candy with
siblings?
Would you be the first home with your
goodies?
What would you have dressed in from
age 1 to 7?
We'll never know, 'cause you are in
Heaven.
This I wish, this frightful night,
Watch over your siblings,
And sleep well, my precious angel in
flight.

*~Cathy Bender,
Mandy's Mother
Southern NV BP/USA
www.bereavedparentsusa.org*



Love Gifts



Were Received From:

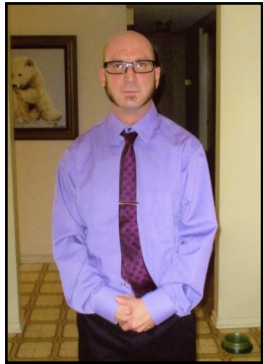


Bobbie Mathers & Dan Spencer

In Loving Memory of Their Son:

**Peter
Spencer**

2/5 - 9/4



The Gifts You've Given Me

I left the need to know Why behind years ago
Instead,
I practice finding peace with the inner turmoil,
accepting the unacceptable,
living my truth.
You have given me the gift of uncertainty
and thus, taught me to live in the Now.

The fingers of your loss have quietly shaped me,
molding away the sharp edges,
my judgment of others,
my innocence.
You have given me the gift of Humility.

You were a child,
my child.
Now you parent.
Invisibly, quietly, form behind the veil,
you show me the meaning
of Life.
You have given me the gift of Awareness.

I am not the same.
In losing you,
I found my strength, my sorrow,
my compassion, my
Self.
You have given me the gift of Suffering.

These tears carry knowledge
that through suffering came
Understanding,
and through understanding came
Forgiveness,
and through forgiveness came
Love.

You fluttered in my womb like a butterfly,
and now you flutter in my soul,
eternally a part of me.
Eternally giving.

*~Sara Therese
In Memory of Shawn
TCF Tucson, AZ*

Bert & Diane Briones

In Loving Memory of Their Daughter:

**Michelle
Briones**

8/24 - 10/11



22 years ago, our life came to a screeching halt, our beautiful 20 year old daughter Michelle lost her life. It has been a long hard journey through our grief but we have had many blessings and joy in our life. We miss her sweetness everyday but we have tried to make her life mean something by keeping her memory alive. Our love for her will remain with us forever.

"Forever In Our Hearts"

Our Children/Grandchildren/Siblings

Loved and Missed on Their Birthdays



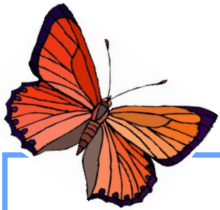
September

Name	Date	Member
Vincent Lizarr	9/6	Ida Hahlbech/Mauro Lizarr
Brian Berry	9/16	Steve Berry
Christopher Rodriguez	9/22	Barbara Rawson
Francisco Garcia	9/10	Veroncia Garcia
Eli Rodriguez	9/26	Pahola Mascorro
Matthew Weiss	9/21	William Weiss

October

Name	Date	Member
Jamie Knopf	10/21	Jim & Susan Kirk
Dwayne Laub	10/6	Mary Trimmel
Brianna Millard Smith	10/6	David & Laurie Millard
Randal Smith	10/24	Sharon Smith
Aiden Lopez	10/27	Cesar & Jessica
Aiden Lopez (Grandchild)	10/27	Carmen Smith
Travis Marton	10/15	Andrew & Ricki Marton
Tommy Sziklay	10/21	Keith & Lise Parcels

Lovingly Remembered on Their Angel Dates



September

Name	Date	Member
Thomas Callin	9/6	John & Rumi Callin
Jeffrey Costin	9/3	Richard & Carol Costin
Michael Rodriguez (Sibling)	9/19	Debbie DiCorrado
Cyrena Becerra	9/5	Mona Gonzalez
Austin Losorelli	9/30	Joe & Phyllis Losorelli
Peter Spencer	9/4	Bobbie Mathers
Christian Pratt	9/12	Terence & Rakeia Pratt-Smith
Alan Bartfoi	9/9	John & Susan Bartfoi

October

Name	Date	Member
Michelle Briones	10/11	Bert & Diane Briones
Vincent Lizarr	10/5	Ida Hahlbech/Mauro Lizarr
Adam Bouziane	10/29	Laura Erdmann-Bouziane
Greg Hilton	10/2	Kathy Hilton
Sage Gallegos	10/17	Alex & Anita Gallegos
Sarah Crittenden	10/20	Steve & Jeanne Crittenden
Michael Leone	10/5	Mariacristina Leone

Daydreams

Once a day and sometimes more
 You knock upon my daydream door
 And I say warmly come right in
 I'm glad you're here with me again.
 Then we sit down and have a chat
 Recalling this, discussing that
 Until some tasks that I must do
 Forces me away from you.
 Reluctantly I say good-by

Smiling with a little sigh
 For though my daydreams bring you near
 I wish that you were really here.
 But what reality cannot change
 My dreams and wishes can arrange
 And through my wishing you'll be brought
 To me each day; a happy thought.

~Stephen A. Wright
 TCF Champaign-Urbana, IL

